1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

583 me with pride how she was beaten about the head and body and dragged fifty yards by the hair. The captured girl is taken without delay to a prepared hideout in a cave or forest clearing. Here she is held by the bridegroom for three days and three nights. On the fourth day, the man takes the girl to the nearest police post and gives himself up, explaining that he took the girl from her home because he wished to marry her. The police at once send for the father or brother of the girl, and in his presence the police officer asks her if she wishes to marry her abductor or return to her home. She is asked this question three times and gives her answer three times. If she says that she is willing to marry the man they are taken immediately to the
● [623] church and the service is celebrated. If she elects to return home, she is handed over to her kinsmen while the man is held to await trial on a serious charge which may send him to prison
583 for a number of years. It is remarkable that in the five cases of
581 abduction which I discovered amongst the Zagori Sarakatsani, there is only one instance of the girl choosing to return to her own people. During the days and nights when she is detained by her abductor, the situation is carefully explained to her. If she refuses to marry the man, nobody will believe that after three nights in the wilderness with an ardent lover she is any longer a virgin. In any case, she cannot expect to be sought in marriage except by a man of low prestige or a widower.
[627] Secondly, if she goes back to her family, it inevitably obliges one of her brothers to seek vengeance on the abductor when he emerges from prison. And in this case, the brother in turn may lose his life in counter vengeance or, at least, be forced into voluntary exile. Thirdly, she is asked if it is not pleasant, despite the sudden shocks, to be married to a man who is willing to risk his life to take her as his wife. For these reasons, and especially for the first of them, the girl is more likely to say 'Yes' than 'No'.

583 Abduction, then, is a recognized institution through which,
577 if the normal negotiations between two opposed groups for the arrangement of a marriage break down in a manner detrimental to his social prestige, a man may yet save his reputation and win his bride without necessarily precipitating the two families into acts of reciprocal vengeance. To refuse a bridegroom is to suggest that he is not worthy. The abduction of the

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

The attribution of envy often rests on valid

grounds, for such women come, in the main, from families of low prestige and little material prosperity where difficulties in arranging honourable marriages are almost inevitable.

This completes the description of ideal types. Men and women struggle to identify themselves with the ideal type personality that is appropriate to their sex and time of life. And if a man lives in conformity with these normative expectations of social conduct, he is described as τίμιος, honourable. Clearly τίμιος, honourable, is a word with considerably wider reference and less specificity than τιμή, honour, since it covers a range of qualities whose applicability is relative to the age and sex of the person described as honourable; while, on the other hand, the values associated with τιμή remain always unchanged. If the head of a family fails to avenge the breaking of his daughter's betrothal because there is no adult son, it may be argued that as an 'honourable' man his inaction is due to his concern to protect his family. But if circumstances of age and family commitments excuse to a degree the loss of honour, nevertheless honour is lost. Opposition of the two concepts 'honour' and 'honourable' is not frequent but, when it does occur, the former is always the significant standard where prestige is concerned.

4. THE HONOURABLE MAN: NEGATIVE RESTRICTIONS

If the man who is τίμιος, honourable, must attempt to achieve a pattern of ideal conduct, there are also certain negative restrictions on action which he must accept. That these restrictions concern, in almost every case, conduct that wantonly threatens the integrity of the family life is not remarkable when we remember on the one hand the spiritual and material significance of the Sarakatsan family group, and on the other the distrust, hostility, and competition which mark the relations between families that are not related through kinship or marriage.

Scandal which falsely questions the virtue of a maiden is believed to be particularly wicked. It may be easily achieved by only a few allusive remarks, whose author probably succeeds in remaining anonymous. For this reason, perhaps, it is strongly believed that God will punish those who spread lying scandals.

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

183 156 577 584 Sometimes, however, the identity of a scandalmonger becomes known. John went to another village to catch a glimpse of the daughter of George Carvounis whom he was considering as a possible bride for his younger brother Demetrios. In the coffee-shop he casually mentioned the girl's name to Michael Goulas who, perhaps guessing the direction of the visitor's interest, told him that the girl was round-shouldered and absent-minded. At first John accepted this statement and without further delay returned to his home: but later he was persuaded by the marriage negotiator that he had been deceived, and after a further visit the marriage contract was eventually arranged. Goulas is relatively prosperous but already had a reputation for meanness and taciturnity. Even before this incident he was an infrequent visitor to the coffee-shop where he was careful to avoid any large gathering in whose company he might have to spend money. Meanness, envy, and unsociability form a pattern of qualities related in Sarakatsan thinking to evil and dishonour. The unsociable man is so because he has something to hide, he hides what he lacks, and what he lacks makes him envious of others. Meanness follows naturally upon envy. Had the poison of his scandal been effective, the crime of Goulas would probably never have become known. In the event, he was condemned and avoided by those who accepted John's version of the incident, and people did not hesitate to describe him as a man without honour (ἄτιμος).

It follows that an honourable man, when he covertly glimpses a prospective bride, is careful never to disclose, except to trusted kinsmen, the true purpose of his visit. For if he decides not to ask for the girl's hand, and this fact becomes public knowledge, people will wonder what flaw he sees in the girl's character and qualities. More generally, it is evil to spread any false scandal which may provoke insult, and response to insult, between other men, and may lead to killings and orphans.

592 579 689 The hut or house is inviolable. No stranger may invade it without an invitation. Similarly, whatever takes place within the sanctuary of its walls is private and sacred to the members of the family. This understanding makes possible the warmth, affection, and easy intercourse of family life secluded from the public gaze. It is a sin, and a source of the greatest shame, if a man is caught with his ear to the wall of his neighbour's house

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

or hut. It is, nevertheless, true that people are insatiably curious about the details of domestic life and relations in other families. The condemnation of eavesdropping, although ideally it points to the recognition of the right of family privacy, in practice merely places a negative sanction on one particularly blatant method of obtaining information about other people's affairs.

Men are not honourable who, possessing great physical strength, use it to tyrannize others. They are men who without cause or restraint attack others with insults, using their mothers' or sisters' names in offensive sexual contexts or uttering other provocative blasphemies. Such a man, it is believed, purposely stages an incident to humiliate another who must either lose honour by not responding, or suffer a physical beating. It is accepted that, in most instances, to insult another is neither avoidable nor dishonourable. A sheep strays across a boundary, another shepherd stones it, its owner insults him, blows are exchanged. This sequence of events is to be expected in a community where the interests of different families conflict and each man must maintain his self-regard and the honour of the family. But wanton and unprovoked outrage is evil.

There are, also, categories of persons whom it is always dishonourable for a man to assault: women, old men, young boys, and children, persons weaker than himself. A man who interferes with women, or picks a quarrel with an old man or a young boy, quickly loses his social reputation. It sometimes occurs that, when grazing land is disputed, a family will send its sheep under the guard of a young shepherd boy into the disputed area, knowing that the other shepherd will not improve his case with the community, the villagers, or the police, if he strikes the youth. However, this is a dangerous tactic since, if the young shepherd is struck, honour demands retaliation.

There is one other category of persons that a man must not exploit, the very poor. Whereas a Sarakatsanos will not hesitate to trick or deceive other men, it is not honourable to take advantage of a very poor man with only twenty or thirty animals, particularly if he has a young family. It is the very fact of his dependence on the generosity and forbearance of those of greater power and prestige that morally prevents them from exploiting him. In the face of the implicit admission of his failure in life they cannot press home their advantage. Since

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

156 577 828 591 assume, ideally, a community in which all families are equal in their possession of honour, and all men are equal in the honourable discharge of the duties associated with their social roles. Although a Sarakatsanos seldom explicity attributes prestige to another, and struggles always to find some failings in another's character when he discusses him, yet by the recognition that he gives another in public life, by the way he shares conversation and drinking companionship, he may implicity admit him to a position of equality. A man may also talk or drink with a person he considers to be of inferior prestige, but there are fine nuances of attitude which make this difference between them very clear. If this evaluation of prestige is acceptable to the general community the man who is treated as an inferior will receive no public backing if he chooses to interpret this treatment as a slight, and reacts to it violently.

156 577 183 558 The flagrant breaking of social norms leads to the withdrawal of recognition and response, that is to a definitive loss of prestige. After it became known that Goulas had falsely denigrated the daughter of George Carvounis he appeared even more infrequently in public, an admission of his shame and humiliation. When he did enter the coffee-shop people greeted him unenthusiastically, if an exchange of greetings was unavoidable; but nobody engaged him in conversation, or bought him a drink. His presence was tolerated, but he was tacitly expelled from the intimacies of social life. He was no longer an equal in honour.

156 577 626 Conformity is the chief defence against denigration where people believe that the hostile criticism of others protects in some way their own reputation. Moreover the precision of this criticism is considerable since the social roles which a man or woman assumes at any period of life are few in number, and their implications are perfectly understood both by the protagonists and those who observe them. Yet it would be too simple a judgement to think that the concepts of honour and the honourable man depend only on the external sanctions of competition or mutual hostility. For the Sarakatsani believe that these ideals and values, which breathe meaning, purpose, and value into their lives, require no justification or sanction. They are a way of life, not a code of interdictions.

577 But even social conformity does not necessarily protect

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

203 626 [485] older women, are constantly in Jannina for business and shopping. Here, most Sarakatsani eat and sleep at the Korakas Hotel and this establishment is an important clearing-house for business and gossip. The eagerness for news and gossip is intense. The consciousness of being a community stimulates the circulation of news which is all the more urgent because people do not live in a closely settled community. In its turn the very process of evaluating the conduct of other Sarakatsani is a reaffirmation of the solidarity and indeed of the existence of [183] the community as such. Gossip and denigration are carried out in terms of a system of values. Every criticism of a man's conduct, whether it is justified or not, is a restatement of a value.

626 Gossip within the family is uninhibited and subjective. Fantastic allegations of wrongdoing are levelled against other families of the community on negligible evidence. No doubt this contributes to the group's morale and suggests, by contrast, its own integrity. Public discussion of a man's conduct, for instance in a coffee-shop, is more careful and somewhat more [183] factual. Vicious slander without a foundation of hearsay fact merely destroys the accuser's own reputation for being an honourable man. Slander of this kind might be an answerable provocation if any kinsman of the ridiculed man were present at the time. If there is some, but not conclusive, evidence to condemn a man, a spirited debate will take place and it is in these circumstances that the presence of an articulate kinsman may help to salvage a man's reputation. But where a man's fault or failure seems to be clearly established the whole assembly will unite with obvious pleasure to ridicule a man. In this way they emphasize their own probity and prestige. Then, even the presence of kinsmen will not save a man, and if his shortcomings are sufficiently serious they may be driven to abandon him.

626 Gossip never ceases and it seizes on the pettiest of details and 533 circumstances. In situations which especially shock or pique the community's imagination satirical songs are sometimes written. Song writing, of course, is the work of individuals but it depends on the community whether the songs will be accepted and remembered. This is a most feared sanction since the ridicule lives on in the song. The song will not be sung to the victim's face, but he will learn of it, and be bitterly shamed.

/222 cont./

685 Trespassing on their pastures.

The Sarakatsani use force, often armed, to repulse all those who try to trespass on the pastures they have leased.

It is concern for the defense of their interests, indeed their means of subsistence, that prompts them to react in this way; futhermore, they have no other means. Since the danger is to the group, they must face it as a group, the young men constituting the striking force.

683 626 Calumny and defamation.

Those who commit this misdemeanor incur public contempt. Moreover, a man who lets himself be influenced by women's gossip likewise becomes an object of derision.

This contempt is not only constraint of a moral order, but a veritable punishment because it has the same effect as the social disapproval of recalcitrants. We have described the efficacy nature of that sanction in connection with arbitration.

* * * *

671 There remains for us to systematize all the foregoing findings before closing this chapter.

/223/ SYSTEMATIC AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON SARAKATSANI LAW

The sources of Sarakatsani law are custom, equity and common sense. However: first, though some customs are exclusively legal and therefore identifiable as such, there are others that are polyvalent, whose legal aspects intermingles with other aspects; second, common sense and equity are results whose components derive at one and the same time from legal, moral, religious, mythical or rational judgments--in short, from the entire Sarakatsani cultural system which, at that moment, assumes a legal qualifications and functions. (34)

(113) 34. Similar reflections are to be found in several works, for example Sir. P. Vinogradoff: Custom and Right /cited in English/, p. 21.--René Hubert: Science du Droit, p. 51.--M. Radin: La censure des coutumes , p. 90-91.--J. Poirier: